

226 of the god and placed in the god house. These prayers for good luck survive today in the prayer meetings that are held in the several villages before the fleets set out for a fishing contest and in the prayers that are said at sea before the first line is thrown overboard. In the story of Pania (1) a fisherman gives some fish to his god after returning from an expedition, in order to thank him for his services. Informants were unable to state whether this was a common custom in former days.

226 A curious story is that of the man Taewa who became a successful fisherman even though he did not observe any of the fishing tapus:

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784 Taewa tried many times to be a good fisherman, but without success. Disgust, with himself after many years of effort, he decided that the only way to improve his fortune was to circumcise himself. He was the first and only Pukapukan man to do this. With a clam shell, he made a longitudinal slit in the foreskin, then slashed the skin till it hung in tatters. The wounds healed, and ever after Taewa had good luck in fishing. So fortunate was he that he could afford to disobey all the fishing tapus without suffering any penalties from the gods. He named the Black Nebula below Cruz, Te Puniwi, because the shape of the nebula reminded him of the shape of the *puniwi* fish. Some say that Taewa was protected by a spirit in this nebula when he broke tapus, though none knows how this protection was exercised. Others say his luck was due to the fact that he always fished when Te Puniwi rose above the horizon and not at any other time. None could explain the effect of his voluntary circumcision upon fishing luck.

225 There was no method of catching whales. When a whale was stranded on the reef, a call was sent through the three villages. The women rushed off to the talo beds to bring back talo which they prepared for the men who went to cut up the animal. The work of cutting up was supervised by a priest of Te Maungatu, the god who was supposed in some ill-defined way to control the stranding of whales. The blubber was divided among all the people of the island. The vertebrae were used as seats; no use seems to have been made of the whalebone.

SIMPLE METHODS

226 Ill-defined methods of fishing—stone throwing or stone clubbing, stepping on fish, hand scooping, and hand flipping—are employed only incidentally to other activities.

Stone throwing (*hauu ki te wata*) or stone clubbing (*petu ki te wata*) is performed by a man walking through the lagoon shallows who sees lagoon fish near by, often sleeping undisturbed at his approach. Fish killed by this method are yellow mullet, rock groupers, parrot fish, and flounders.

When a man fishing other lagoon fish comes across a flounder resting on the bottom, he makes a quick jab with his foot to pin down the fish, then picks it up, and kills it by hitting it behind the head.

If a man sees a fish resting close by but can not find a stone or stick with which to kill it, he approaches quietly and, quickly dipping his hands into the water, scoops the fish onto the beach. This method is often successful with *tanogol*, *apouhou*, *hoteo*.

[302] in the shape of a cone on top of the head. *Welo* bark was wrapped round the forehead, and the wrapping continued round the cone of hair to the apex. A single piece of turtle shell fastened to the headband stood up in front of the wrapped turbanlike cone. Long *wuti welo* streamers were fastened to the tip of the turtle shell, falling back over the top of the cone to blow out in the wind.

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The headdress of Yamaunga was also called *aumanga*, but was associated with Te Mangatu and Talitonganuku. It consisted of the *welo* headband base to the front of which was fastened a piece of turtle shell cut in a conventional representation of a fish-tail (like a Tau cross with an inverted cross member). To the cross member of this turtle-shell cross were tied *welo* streamers at four equidistant intervals. At equal spaces round the headband were fastened four strips of turtle shell, each 6 inches high. To the tip of each piece of turtle shell was fastened one *welo* streamer.

ORNAMENT AND DECORATION

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Ornaments and body decorations of shell, leaves, and flowers are worn round the waist, over the shoulders, suspended from the ears and hair, on occasions when the Pukapukan man or woman feels the call to beautify the body—for formal festive occasions, or informally whenever flowers and leaves are at hand. Tattooing and body painting were unknown in Pukapuka. There are no discoverable references to them in chants or stories.

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Almost every leaf or flower on the atoll may be worn at one time or another by man, woman, or child as a chaplet (*taumata*), necklace (*yei*), or waist decoration (*titi*). Women seldom return from the talo gardens without a few leaves or flowers stuck in their hair or fastened about the waist as a rough girdle. Men serving as guards or working in the bush always find time to make for themselves a chaplet or necklace of leaves. Children stop in their play to make themselves little foliage decorations. Young people, bound for lovers' meetings on moonlight nights, oil their bodies and hair with sweet-scented coconut oil and make themselves necklaces of *tiale* flowers.

VILLAGE DECORATIONS

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For public festivals, such as those celebrating the winning of a sports contest, each of the three villages has its own characteristic foliage for decorative kilts, chaplets, and shoulder bandoliers. The people of Ngake make their decoration of *muko wala* (the white heart leaves of the pandanus), *lakau yili*, *taumakomako*, or *pola puka*; the people of Loto make decorations of banana leaves (*lau wuti*); the people of Yato, of coconut leaves or the *male* fern. Decorations of these leaves are distinctive signs (*mailongo*) of the respective villages. Waist decorations (*titi*) are worn over the customary basis garment.

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The *titi muko wala* (kilt of white leaves of pandanus) is made by stripping young leaves from the pandanus tree. Spikes are trimmed from each leaf and the leaf is split in two longitudinally. Each leaf is white for most of its length shading to a pale green at one end. A plain *tau* of prepared pandanus (*titi*) is used as a basis girdle. The worker lays the girdle on the ground, takes one leaf and fastens the green end to the

301 type, termed *toumanes*, consisted of small fishhook shanks of pearl shell alternating with pieces of pearl shell cut into other shapes, strung on a cord of *avo*. There is no example of the *toumanes* on the atoll today, but Talainga reported that he saw in the mistakenly opened grave pieces of pearl shell cut into the shape of five-pointed stars which he suggested belonged to an old *toumanes*.

301 The pearl-shell breast ornament (*yows*) shown in figure 19.6, is the most valued type of permanent ornament. It was formerly worn by the chief for ceremonial occasions. The formal placing of the *yows* round the neck of an aspirant to a vacant title signified that he was the chosen man. Skinner (24.p.187), in discussing pearl-shell pendants in the Cook Islands, suggests that these pendants may have been attached to the head by plaiting the uncut hair of the wearer. In support of this theory he reproduces from Gill (10.pl.p.18) a section of the plate entitled, "A Village in Pukapuka under Heathenism." Whatever the validity of the scene purported to be shown in this plate, informants knew of no custom of attaching ornaments to uncut hair, nor is there any record of crescentic pearl-shell ornaments being attached to arms, torso, or sides of the head.

EAR ORNAMENTS

301 Ear ornaments are termed *unakavavenga*. The ear lobes of an infant are pierced with a hook of the sword fish or a spine of the pandanus leaf. 304 A piece of *puhama* wood is pushed through the hole and left until it heals, to prevent closing. There is no record of lobe distension by pushing bulky or heavy articles through the lobe holes. Earrings consist of small rings of coconut shell (*unakavavenga ngoipa lalunga*) or else more elaborate earrings of coconut shell, turtle shell, and pearl shell. The earring illustrated (fig. 19.6) is beautiful when polished. Informants stated that the design was an old one and could be executed with old time Pukapukan implements. Simple ear ornaments are made by pushing the stem of a *tiolo* flower through the lobe hole. Another ornament called *kakolivi* is made by levering off with the thumb nail the floral bract (*kakolivi*) of the immature coconut, pinching the bract together to make a short slit. The slit is then placed against the lobe of the ear, and when the fingers are released the lobe is pinched by the natural spring of the bract.

HEAD ORNAMENTS

301 Simple head ornaments are made by pushing flowers into the hair or binding the hair with strips of pandanus or coconut leaflet. A flower so worn is a *piki*; a headband is a *putiki*. More elaborate headbands are made by splitting the flower and seed containers (*hupua*) of the pandanus tree

868 of fishing there is in tales and chants. Similarly, in the learning of the old
 533 chants and songs, practices are held before some village contest, and the
 245 village group of men and women, young and old, sit up throughout the night
 repeating time and time again the songs and chants which are to be sung at
 the conclusion of the contest. At the present time, when the villages go to
 the reserves to make copra, the opportunity is taken to alternate nights
 devoted to the practicing of chants with the nights devoted to the customary
 hymn practices.

PUBERTY

- 304 No surgical operation or physical manipulation was performed on the Pukapukan boy or girl. A foreskin naturally stretched back from the glans was considered a shameful abnormality (*luma*) because it gave the appearance of circumcision. It was a matter for joking among the girls and caused much sorrow to the boy affected. One reference only to circumcision occurs in the folk tales (p. 54).

841 The occurrence of the first menses is spoken of as the opening or piercing
 864 of the body (*na pu*).

145 Though her mother does not tell her in advance what to expect, a girl is neverthe-
 881 less well informed from discussion with her older girl friends. When she finds herself
 menstruating (*toto*) for the first time, she says to her mother, "I aku na toto" (I am
 bleeding). Informants say that a girl is naturally frightened (*mataku*) or ashamed
 (*wakama*) when she first discovers she is menstruating. Cramps are common in both
 stomach and back. Periods range in length from three days to a week. The menstrual
 pad (*pulu tautape*) consists of several coconut husks pounded soft and tied with a piece
 of coconut fiber. Each pad is disposed of in a separate hole dug on the beach for the
 purpose. There is no fear of the blood. The method of disposal is merely a convenient
 way of getting rid of soiled objects. A woman does not have sexual intercourse during
 the menstrual period, on pain of becoming ill from having the blood "pushed up into
 her chest"; but there is no tapu on her activities or contacts with members of the house-
 hold. No physical explanation is given for the facts of menstruation. If a young girl
 commences to menstruate before her mother considers that other signs of physical
 maturity warrant it, the mother is angry with the girl because this indicates that she is
 already having a love affair with some man or is, at least, already interested in the
 opposite sex. Molingi said, "Girls who do not interest themselves in men do not start
 to menstruate until later on when they are older and ready to marry. Girls who men-
 struate too early have an undue fondness for men."

- 841 Two types of physical therapy are used in cases of menstrual trouble. For menstruation prolonged beyond the average four days, the blood is washed away from the pudenda, and the parts bathed in hot water. For delayed menstruation marked by pain, the body is bathed in cold water, either fresh or salt, to cool off the body; and the abdomen is then pressed (*lomilomi*) until menstruation commences.

886 Informants could not explain the recognized connection between the ces-
 [843] sation of the menses with pregnancy, nor could they explain the physiology of the menopause. This is referred to as the closing of the blood flow by the